

EDUCATION WEEK

Published Online: December 10, 2013

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By Catherine Gewertz

It's one thing for all but a few states to agree on one shared set of academic standards. It's quite another for them to agree on when students are "college ready" and to set that test score at a dauntingly high place. Yet that's what two state assessment groups are doing.

The two common-assessment consortia are taking early steps to align the "college readiness" achievement levels on their tests with the rigorous proficiency standard of the National Assessment of Educational Progress, a move that is expected to set many states up for a steep drop in scores.

After all, fewer than four in 10 children reached the "proficient" level on the 2013 NAEP in reading and math.

Facing that music on yet another round of tests will be politically painful for the many states planning to use the common-core exams being developed by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers, or PARCC, in 2015.

But it appears unlikely that students themselves will feel the sting right away. That's because states are taking a wait-and-see approach to attaching individual-level student stakes—such as high school graduation or grade-to-grade promotion—to those high cutoff scores.

Cautious Approach

Massachusetts, for instance, recently approved a two-year transition plan that will keep its statewide test, the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System, or MCAS, as a high school graduation requirement through 2016 while it decides whether to use the exams developed by the 19-member PARCC organization for that purpose instead.

Education Commissioner Mitchell D. Chester said it doesn't make sense to expect teenagers to suddenly meet a college-ready bar in order to graduate, when four in 10 students who pass the MCAS have to take at least one remedial class in state colleges or universities.

"Our system isn't ready to deliver a college-ready education to all our students off the bat," he said. "I don't want to get there by having students punished by not meeting that bar."

Even in Massachusetts, a state that consistently outperforms other states, and many countries, on tests of scholastic prowess, high school diplomas often don't signify adequate preparation for

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Posted: Thursday, Mar. 06, 2014

NC approves lower passing scores for student achievement exams

By T. Keung Hui
PUBLISHED IN: EDUCATION

RALEIGH The State Board of Education approved new standards Thursday for state exams that will lower required passing scores, potentially saving thousands of third-graders from having to go to summer reading camps under the new Read to Achieve law.

State officials said the change – passed by an 8-4 vote – will more accurately depict students' level of skill in reading, math and science, allowing school districts to determine which students need additional help. The change will likely affect large numbers of students who would have fallen just short of passing under the standards used last school year, when new exams under the more rigorous Common Core standards resulted in much lower passing rates than in prior years.

State officials say the new scores fall within the "standard error of measure" of last year's minimum passing scores. The term refers to the margin by which a test may be inaccurate in assessing student performance.

"It's a recognition that any test has error," state schools Superintendent June Atkinson told board members of the new standards. "It can be positive for the student or it can be negative for the student."

However, critics say the change represents a retreat from the state board's earlier stance on using the highest standards for measuring performance. The changes, while affecting more than just third-grade performance, will also help cushion the potential impact of the Read To

Waiving high school time requirements

The State Board of Education will vote Thursday on waiving minimum time requirements for high school students to help school districts cope with the impact of this winter's snow days.

The board will consider suspending a policy that says students who attend high schools on a block schedule must have at least 135 hours of class time to receive credit for a course. Most North Carolina high schools use the block schedule, in which students complete yearlong courses in one semester by attending longer classes each day.

Rebecca Garland, chief academic officer at the state Department of Public Instruction, said school districts across the state are having problems meeting the time requirements for high school students because they've had so many snow days this semester.

The change would not allow school districts to get around the state requirement that they offer 185 days or 1,025 hours of classroom instruction annually.

High school time requirements waived

Pat Cain Cotham



Timeline About Photos 392 Friends 68 Mutual More

About

At-Large Commissioner, Board of County Commissioners at Mecklenburg County and Employment Advocate at Center for Community Transitions

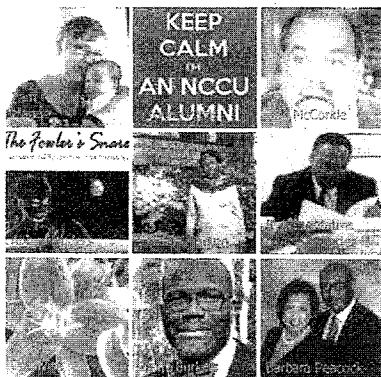
Studied BA Spanish at University of Missouri - Columbia
Past: University of Missouri and Bishop Du Bourg

Lives in Charlotte, North Carolina

Photos • 392



Friends • 68 Mutual



Places



Grady Cole Center — Dianna Davis was with Pat Cain Cotham.
last Sunday

Post Photo

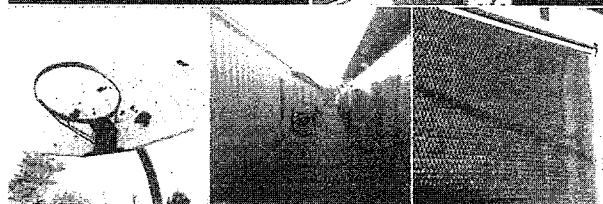
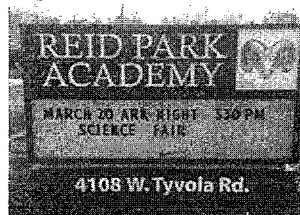
Write something...



Pat Cain Cotham

8 hours ago near Matthews, NC • Edited

Visited Reid Park Academy, a school of poverty for children up to eighth grade. Police car was outside by front door and I saw no smiles on students or teachers. The Principal is new and has an optimistic spirit but the school needs some "serious love." Parts of the school reminded me of a prison complete with grills on windows. Teachers work hard and only ask for more for the children not themselves. One teacher had 8 autistic children in her class while standards say six is the limit. No flowers, no inspiring pictures—just dreariness with dedicated teachers and staff. We need to help them. Precious children, strong teachers, great principal—need some joy and more inspiring conditions. (8 photos)



Like • Comment • Share

Ruth Sloane, Mike Murdock and 10 others like this.

View 13 more comments



Pat Cain Cotham Wayne Powers, I did read your post about 20 years ago and how wonderful the school was. I tried to reply to you but I accidentally deleted it. In fact, I deleted my own comment-yikes. You are a man of ideas and vision-this school needs help. Let's foc... See More

about an hour ago • Edited • Like • 2



Patrick Burris Thanks Pat Cain Cotham; you give me too much credit.

about an hour ago • Like • 2



Patrick Burris Wayne Powers please repost. Thanks!

about an hour ago • Like

Home Arts

David L. Howard added a new photo.

Sponsored

Pat Cain Cotham likes Dianna Davis's status.

Must Be 19+ To Play

John L. Webb Jr. commented on Kevin Webb's status: "Money Ball Bill...he's the man!"

Commander



Elizabeth Legena Blue commented on Tiffany McCaskill's status: "Who is that?"

BLOODY you had with the top of the game on Facebook.

Margaree Hill-Hall likes Joyce Meyer Ministries's status.

Play War Commander.

Play No. 1,000,000 people played War Commander.

Tenia Price Parks and Heidi Moseley are now friends.

Thelma Fletcher likes a photo on Pixlr.

AT&T for Small Business. att.com

Leonard Roger Gresham Jr and Jenny Le are now friends.



Mike Murdock 15/15. Hard to understand how that means I scored better than...

For a limited time, AT&T U-verse High Speed Internet for \$24.99/mo.

Linda Klein and Jennifer Parks are now friends.

Barbara Peacock likes David Flowers Jr's status.

Barbara Peacock shared peaceful parenting's photo.

Recent

2014

2013

2012

2011

2010

2009

2008

1990s

Bar

Recent

2014

2013

2012

2011

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Recent

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2008

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Bar

MORE FRIENDS (9)

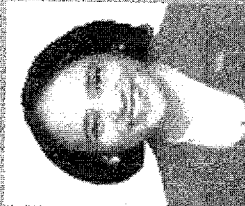
Search

**Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools
Child Nutrition Services
% of Free and Reduced
as of October 31**

Year	Total Free	Total Reduced	Grand Total	ADM	Percent Free	Percent Reduced	Percent Free & Red
2012-13	69,696	8,266	77,962	143,614	48.53%	5.76%	54.29%
2011-12	68,515	7,936	76,451	140,472	48.77%	5.65%	54.42%
2010-11	66,367	7,675	74,042	138,619	47.88%	5.54%	53.41%
2009-10	61,153	9,246	70,399	136,577	44.78%	6.77%	51.55%
2008-09	56,117	10,546	66,663	136,765	41.03%	7.71%	48.74%
2007-08	53,033	10,748	63,781	134,995	39.29%	7.96%	47.25%
2006-07	50,580	9,470	60,050	131,977	38.32%	7.18%	45.50%
2005-06	50,799	8,647	59,446	126,498	40.16%	6.84%	46.99%
2004-05	49,446	8,626	58,072	121,160	40.81%	7.12%	47.93%
2003-04	43,383	7,548	50,931	116,529	37.23%	6.48%	43.71%
2002-03	39,046	7,679	46,725	112,136	34.82%	6.85%	41.67%
2001-02	35,591	7,775	43,366	108,863	32.69%	7.14%	39.84%
2000-01	31,580	7,241	38,821	104,668	30.17%	6.92%	37.09%

**June-13 REID PARK
ACADEMY 95.96% Free &
Reduced**

Black Supts. Endorsing *Urban Manifesto* Promoting Charter Schools For Urban Education Reform (Organized By NYC Supt. Joel Klein, October 10, 2010)*



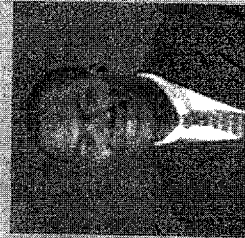
Carol Johnson
Supt., Boston, MA



Eugene, White Supt.,
Indianapolis, IN



J. Wm. Covington Supt.
Kansas City, MO



Jean-Claude Brizard
Supt., Rochester, NY



Lavonne Sheffield
Supt., Rockford, IL



William Hite, Supt., Prince
Georges County, MD



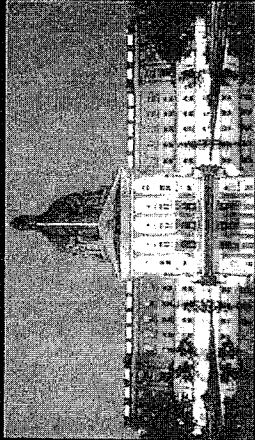
Ron Huberman
Supt., Chicago, IL



Philadelphia Supt. Arlene Ackerman initially signed the *Manifesto* but withdrew her support after receiving the final draft

*Supts. pressured to support Charters as their Foundation funders view them as solution

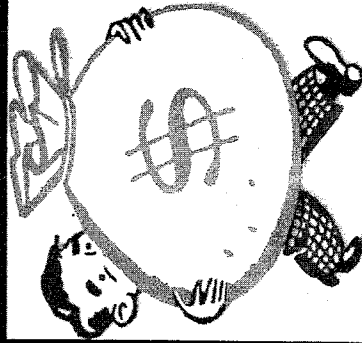
Why the Voucher-Charter and Privatization Focus On Minorities?



State legislatures have refused to equalize funding across school districts



The business sector will be able to access more of the \$400 billion+ annual public education budget



Vouchers and Charters deflect attention away from the transfer of public money into private hands



Vouchers/Charters are a cheap way to address minority concerns about public education, and to provide false hope

Posted at 11:34 AM ET, 10/16/2010

Supt. Ackerman's critique of 'manifesto'

By Valerie Strauss

This was written by Philadelphia Schools Supt. Arlene Ackerman. She was one of 16 big-city school district chiefs who signed onto a reform "manifesto" published in the Washington Post this week that was long on rhetoric and short on substance. It was initiated by New York City Schools Chancellor Joel Klein and signed by D.C. Schools Chancellor Michelle Rhee, who has since resigned, and 14 others.

Yesterday Ackerman told me that she had not seen the final version of the manifesto — which views charter schools as a big answer to urban school failure, bashes teachers unions and supports market-driven "fixes" to schools — and though an aide gave permission for her name to be added to it, she does not agree with it. Here is her statement.

By Arlene Ackerman

Some may feverishly await the arrival of Superman to resolve the problems that overwhelm our public education system, while others prefer to enlist with the personality of the day or prescribe to the scripted agenda of the hour. However, my preference, which remains unchanged for the past 42 years, has been to tackle school reform through collaborative efforts, with the start and end goal of providing quality educational opportunities for all children who attend public schools. Period.

This said, I have written this letter in response to the Washington Post piece entitled, "How to Fix Our Schools: A Manifesto{hellip}" after discovering that the original document (from Superintendent Peter Gorman) to which I affixed my name was not what later appeared in print, nor did it fully encompass my core principles. Unfortunately, the views of this career urban educator are not likely to make the big screen because the facts are too complex and there is no kryptonite.

Yes, there are ineffective teachers who shouldn't be in our schools. However, it is far too simplistic to castigate them or leave the impression that the failure of our children would cease if we eliminated tenure or the entire union. The truth is our public schools have been asked not only to educate children but also to solve many of the ills that the larger society either cannot or will not fix. I am speaking of issues directly related to poverty like hunger, violence, homelessness, and unchecked childhood diseases (asthma and diabetes) to name a few. In spite of these challenges, there are thousands of dedicated and committed educators who are working hard to make access to a quality education for all children who attend public schools a reality.

I contend that if our intended goal is to ensure that all parents have viable educational choices in their neighborhoods then we must stop the finger pointing and blame. We must be honest about the myriad of challenges we face in achieving this goal and articulate a strategic and integrated approach to solving a complex set of issues that include effective teaching. We must come together with the same kind of hard hitting, strategic and focused leverage that the President used to inspire and capture the hope of a faithful nation, unwilling to give up on the ills of the economy, world peace, and the environment.

Yes, teachers matter. Thus, it is imperative that we help them or remove those who cannot effectively teach our children. Let us also enlist the entire nation in the pursuit of teacher quality. Let us focus our efforts on the role of the teacher as a pivotal position of new knowledge in a changing society. And in doing so, let us raise the value of teaching as an intellectual and highly prized career, much as it is in other countries.

Lastly, with these perspectives, I also offer some stern, unsolicited advice to all of us who care about fixing our public schools: Be careful in this time of polarity not to get caught up in the scripted political agendas of individuals or organizations who seek to divide rather than bring us together. A collaborative approach to reform may not be easy, glamorous or movie-worthy, but it is a stronger and sustainable solution that is likely to outlast the tenure of individuals or politicized agendas.

Respectfully,
Arlene C. Ackerman, Ed.D.
Superintendent
The School District of Philadelphia

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By Valerie Strauss | October 16, 2010; 11:34 AM ET

Categories: [Guest Bloggers](#), [School turnarounds/reform](#), [Teachers](#) | Tags: [arlene ackerman](#), [charter schools](#), [joel klein](#), [manifesto](#), [michelle rhee](#), [school reform](#), [teachers](#)

GRADE 3 MATHEMATICS—RELEASED FORM



23 Which expression is equal to 12×5 ?

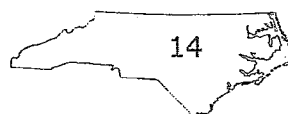
- A $2 + (10 \times 5)$
- B $(6 + 5) \times (6 + 5)$
- C $(6 \times 5) + (6 \times 5)$
- D $(10 + 5) \times (2 + 5)$

24 Mrs. Parrish has 3 sisters.

- She mailed 2 cards to each of her sisters in October.
- She mailed 4 cards to each of her sisters in November.
- The expression $(2 \times 3) + (4 \times 3)$ could be used to find the total number of cards Mrs. Parrish mailed to her sisters.

Which expression shows another way to find the total number of cards Mrs. Parrish mailed to her sisters?

- A $2 \times 3 + 7$
- B $(2 + 3) \times 4$
- C $3 \times 2 + 4$
- D $3 \times (2 + 4)$

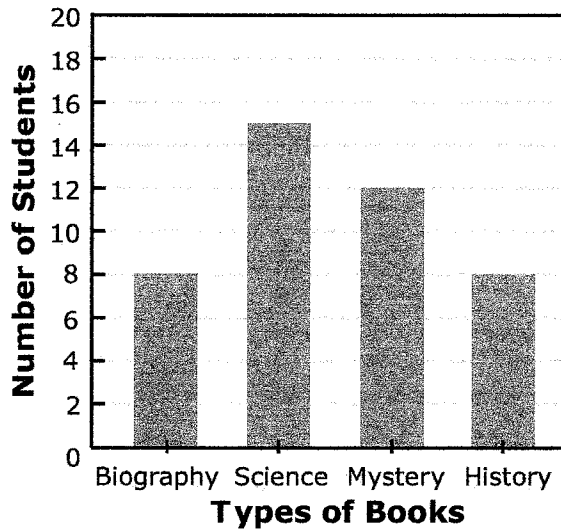


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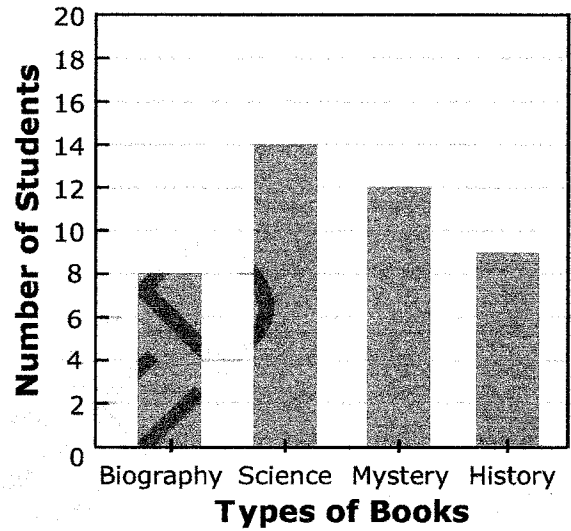


- 29 Third-graders chose their favorite type of book. Which graph shows that 6 more students chose science than chose history?

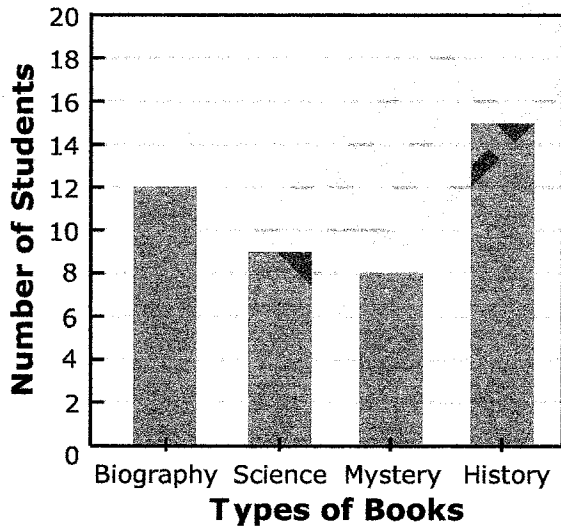
A Favorite Types of Books



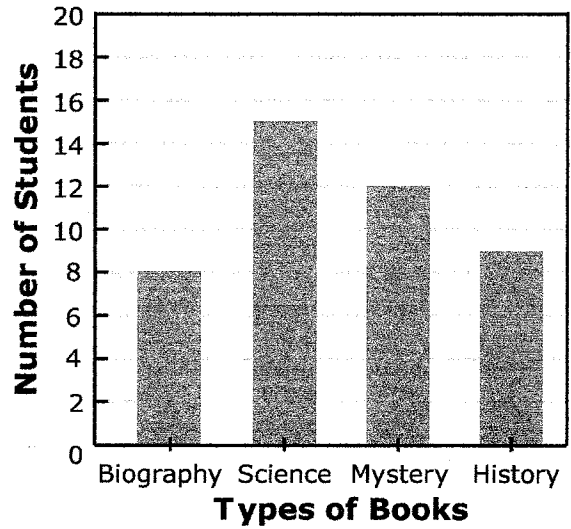
B Favorite Types of Books



C Favorite Types of Books



D Favorite Types of Books



To reiterate, under the definition of a "sound basic education," the *Leandro* Court included four distinct educational achievements. They are:

(1) sufficient ability to read, write, and speak the English language and a sufficient knowledge of *fundamental* mathematics and physical science to enable the student to *function* in a complex and rapidly changing society;

(2) *sufficient fundamental* knowledge of geography, history, and basic economic and political systems to enable the student to *make informed choices* with regard to issues that affect the student personally or affect the student's community, state, and nation;

(3) *sufficient academic and* vocational skills to enable the student to *successfully engage* in post-secondary education or vocational training; and

(4) *sufficient academic and* vocational skills to enable the student to *compete on an equal basis* with others in further formal education or *gainful employment* in contemporary society.

Leandro, 346 N.C. at 347, 488 S.E.2d at 255.

